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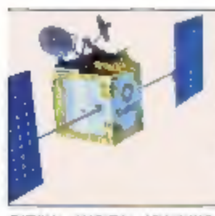

BHARTI-BACKED ONEWEB ALL SET TO LAUNCH 36 SATELLITES

UK-headquartered OneWeb has teamed up with NewSpace India, ISRO's commercial arm, for the launch from Sriharikota

FOCUS ON BROADBAND FROM SPACE SEGMENT

The low-earth orbit satellite communications company said all the 36 satellites have reached the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota. The launch is keenly watched by stakeholders as it will set the stage for some high-voltage action with major players such as Jio vying for a slice of the lucrative satellite-based broadband services market in India

AIMS TO CONNECT HARD-TO-REACH AREAS

- OneWeb will connect towns, villages, and regional municipalities in the hard-to-reach areas "playing a critical role in bridging the digital divide across India," a company statement said
- Earlier this month, Reliance Jio received a Letter of Intent from the telecom department for satellite communication services

648

SATELLITES ONEWEB PLANS TO HAVE. OF THIS, 428 HAVE ALREADY BEEN LAUNCHED

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Sonia summons Venugopal as race gains pace

Gehlot tells party MLAs he will accept high command's directive while staying as CM

SHAHID FARIDI @ New Delhi

Ashok Gehlot

K C Venugopal

Close to a dozen PCCs root for Rahul

The Jharkhand PCC has joined nearly a dozen state units including Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Bihar, Odisha, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Haryana and Kerala to pass resolutions urging Rahul Gandhi to lead the party

THE Congress presidential election gathered frenetic pace on Tuesday with party president Sonia Gandhi summoning general secretary in-charge of organisation K C Venugopal for an urgent discussion, and Ashok Gehlot calling a late-evening meeting of Rajasthan MLAs before his departure to Delhi to meet Sonia.

Venugopal flew in from Kerala, where he was participating in the Bharat Jodo Yatra with Rahul Gandhi, to meet Sonia at her 10, Janpath residence. Sources said the two discussed the presidential election, nomination for which is scheduled to start from September 24.

After the meeting, Venugopal called Gehlot and asked him to meet Sonia on Wednesday.

At a meeting Gehlot called of party MLAs in Jaipur on Tuesday night, he said he will accept Sonia's decision on the party's presidential election when he meets her on Wednesday. Gehlot added that he will not only present the next state budget but also lead the party unit in the Rajasthan polls. According to MLAs present at the meeting, Gehlot indicated that he would continue as CM even after becoming AICC president.

Sources said after meeting Sonia, Gehlot will leave for Kerala to meet Rahul Gandhi. He will return to Delhi and stay there till the last day of nomination on September 30.

With Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor meeting Sonia on Monday and expressing his desire to contest, the high command has started preparing for the elections amid more state units adopting resolutions demanding the return of Rahul as party chief. Although Sonia told Tharoor that there would be no 'official' candidate, sources said the leadership has made up its mind to field a loyalist who is likely to sail through with the help of the handpicked electoral college of 9,300 PCC delegates.

Gehlot is reportedly the high command's first choice. For the record though, he has been saying he will try and convince Rahul to contest. Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel, too, has said he will try and persuade Rahul to return as party chief.

Senior party leaders including P Chidambaram, Jairam Ramesh, among others, have demanded the next president be chosen by consensus.

MINISTER NIRANI FLAYS IAS OFFICER IN HOUSE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE state government faced major embarrassment in the Legislative Council on Tuesday after Industries Minister **Murugesh Nirani** accused a senior IAS officer of not clearing a file related to a sugar factory. In a rare instance, the minister even named the officer in the House.

Nirani's remarks during a debate on sugar factories exposed a lack of understanding between the ministers and officers, drawing flak from the Opposition members.

"The sugar minister is doing good work and encouraging sugar industries, but department secretary Pankaj Kumar Pandey, who is here, has not given the lease agreement for the last two years, despite being told by the chief minister and the sugar minister," Nirani said, pointing towards the officers' gallery in the Council. The Pandavapura Cooperative Sugar Factory in Mandya was given to Nirani's firm Nirani Sugars Limited on a lease for 40 years. Expressing his displeasure, the minister, who is also an industrialist, said he invested ₹50 crore to start operations. "He (IAS officer) has not given the lease agreement. As a minister, I am not sure if I can speak about it here. I feel sad about it," Nirani said.

His statement led to a furore in the Council as opposition Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) members hit out at the government. "If this is the situation of a minister, imagine the state of affairs," said Congress MLC Prakash Rathod.

Minister for Textiles and Sugar Shankar Patil Munenakoppa, however, defended the IAS officer saying that officers have to follow the rules. Patil explained that Nirani's factory had sought stamp duty exemption and Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai will decide on it. Sources said the lease agreement was not signed as the stamp duty exemption that comes to around Rs 26 crore was not part of the tender conditions and it was not accepted by the government. The CM held two rounds of talks and it was decided that the tax will be initially paid by the government and later the company will pay it back in instalments, sources said.

PFI started hijab issue, provoked students: State to SC

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

CLAIMING that till 2021 no girl was wearing hijab in educational institutions, the Karnataka government told the Supreme Court that the controversy broke out after a social media movement started by the Popular Front of India (PFI). Alleging that the "movement" was designed to create religious discord, Solicitor General of India, Tushar Mehta submitted that it wasn't a spontaneous act by the students but they were made part of a larger conspiracy and they acted as advised. "This upsurge (wearing of hijabs) is not part of their (students) thinking but started with an agitation in September 2021," Mehta said. He even referred to the Karnataka High Court order that had accepted the arguments of "unseen hands to engineer social disharmony" based on police documents.

He contended that for a practice to be considered essentially religious, it should be so compelling that if it is not worn they should be thrown out of the religion. Mehta submitted before a bench of Justices Hemant Gupta and Sudhanshu Dhulia that there was no averment by the students that the practice of wearing hijab started with the religion itself. "You cannot think of a Sikh person without a kadha or pagdi anywhere in the world. There was no averment by the petitioners that the practice started with the religion itself. Practice must be shown to be co-existing with the religion. There is nothing to show that this started with the foundation of the religion," Mehta said.

CONTINUED ON: P9

Putin looking to end war, claims Erdogan

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

WHEN Russian President Vladimir Putin met Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the SCO Summit in Samarkand on Friday last, he said he would end the war in Ukraine soon. In less than a week, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has reaffirmed that Russia is considering ending the conflict.

Erdogan, who was present at the SCO Summit and had a bilateral with Modi, said on Tuesday his impressions after talks with Putin suggest there could be an end to the war, beginning with ceasefire.

In a related development, separatist leaders of Ukraine's Russian-controlled areas of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia announced dates for a referendum to formally join the Russian Federation. Reports also suggest that Russia is mulling swapping 200 prisoners with Ukraine.

Twitter images of Ukrainian defender (L) Sova Serhiy killed in Izium, where mass graves are being exhumed amid allegations of genocide by occupying Russian forces. Serhiy's wife identified him from the bands on his hand. His son called the hand a "symbol of Ukraine's warrior, unbreakable & courageous"

Turkey has been actively trying to find some middle ground. "Together, we need to find a reasonably practical diplomatic solution that will give both sides a dignified way out of the crisis," Erdogan told the opening session of the UN General Assembly on Tuesday.

During the SCO Summit, Modi had told Putin that "this was no era for war". "We will do our best to stop this as soon as possible," Putin said in response.

"The war will end when both sides feel that it is best that they can get out of it. A similar situation occurred in March, when the two sides conditionally reached an agreement, but it didn't go through because one side decided it could get a better deal," said P S Raghavan, former Ambassador to Russia. P12

EXPRESS READ

Pakistan PM faces treason charges

LAHORE: Pakistan's Punjab Assembly has passed a resolution against PM Shehbaz Sharif, seeking his trial under treason charges for consulting his elder brother Nawaz Sharif on appointing the new army chief. P12

2 engineers booked in terror cases in K'taka

SHIVAMOGGA: The Shivamogga Rural police have arrested two engineering graduates for their alleged affiliation to the banned terrorist outfit ISIS. The suspects have been remanded in police custody for 10 days. P5

K'taka Rajyotsava awardee commits suicide

DAVANAGERE: Karnataka Rajyotsava awardee **Salumarada Veerachari** on Tuesday ended his life by hanging from a tree planted by him several years ago, at Mittlakatte village in Harihar taluk. Veerachari had flagged issues, pertaining to alleged misappropriation of funds in the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana and Anna Bhagya Yojana by a PDS centre, with the authorities, but to no avail. Upset over this, Veerachari reportedly ended his life.

EXPRESS IMPACT

FATHER, FOUR OTHERS HELD FOR SELLING BABY

MYSURU: Taking a serious note of the report 'Trans scholar exposes baby-selling incident', published in The New Indian Express on Tuesday (Sept. 20, 2022), the police picked up four people on charges of selling a baby in Chamarajanagar and efforts are on to rescue the baby from a family in Mandya. Officials from the Child Welfare Department and police visited the family who sold the baby. Nagaveni, a heart patient, admitted that her husband Basava, a hotel staffer, had sold the baby to settle debts. Basava has been detained along with four middlemen from Galipura in Chamarajanagar. P5

TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL

'Gauri' bags international award

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

WELL-known Kannada film director Kavitha Lankesh's documentary *'Gauri'* - based on the life of her sister and slain journalist-activist Gauri Lankesh, has won the 'Best Human Rights' film award at the Toronto Women's Film Festival 2022. "I am thankful for the recognition the film has received. It was an extremely traumatic journey for me and my cameraman Deepu. He was with Gauri through her activism," Kavitha told *TNIE*.

The documentary has also been selected for the South Asian Film Festival of Montreal and is in consideration at Doc New York, International Documentary Film Festival of Amsterdam, Sundance Film Festival and other festivals across the world. 'Gauri' was commissioned by Free Press Unlimited, Amsterdam, whose mission stems from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"Last year, they had called for proposals on documentaries on journalists who have lost their lives in war or in acts of violence in the line of duty. There were around 300 proposals out of which Free Press accepted four entries. One of them was mine," Kavitha said.

She said that before submitting the proposal to Free Press, she had asked herself whether she would be able to weather the trauma yet again, of tracking and filming the life of her sister, whose journalistic career was dotted with her activism for people, whose voices are seldom heard till that fatal evening of September 5, 2017 when Gauri was assassinated just outside her house in Rajarajeshwari Nagar in Bengaluru. P5

EXPRESS INTAKE

Gaping hole detected in Sumanahalli bridge | P2

Couple attacked close to top cop's office | P3

Over 6.5 L not identified under urban schemes | P4

Quota politics in Maharashtra, Jharkhand | P10

SpiceJet sends 80 pilots on leave without pay | P12

VIT
Vellore Institute of Technology
(Deemed to be University under section 3 of UGC Act, 1956)

VIT ON THE RISE
IN WORLD & INDIAN RANKINGS

Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities 2022

INDIA RANK	LIST OF THE TOP INDIAN INSTITUTIONS	WORLD RANK
1	Indian Institute of Science	301-400
2-3	University of Delhi	601-700
2-3	Vellore Institute of Technology	601-700
4-7	IIT Delhi	701-800
4-7	IIT Madras	701-800
4-7	IIT Roorkee	701-800
4-7	Jawaharlal Nehru University	701-800
8	IIT Kharagpur	801-900

SOURCE: https://www.shanghairanking.com/rankings/arwu/2022

nirf GOVERNMENT OF INDIA RANKING 2022
9TH* Best University
10TH* Best in Research
12TH* Best in Engineering
18TH* Overall
₹1.02 CRORE PER ANNUM HIGHEST SALARY PACKAGE THROUGH CAMPUS PLACEMENTS
* Vellore & Chennai

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